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8 May 1956

The Honorable Stuart Symington
Chairman, Air Force Subcommittee
Senate Committee on Armed Services
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Attached hereto is the edited transcript of the testimony given before your Subcommittee by me and by other representatives of the United States Intelligence community on 18, 23 and 24 April 1956. You will note that this transcript contains language changes for editorial reasons and for accuracy, and in addition indicates those portions of the testimony which in my opinion must remain wholly classified from the security point of view.

I have carefully reviewed the question of principle involved in the release to the public of material furnished by intelligence officers of the government. In reviewing the precedents, I find no case since I have been associated with the Central Intelligence Agency, that is for more than five years, when any representative of this Agency has given testimony on classified matters which has subsequently been made public. On many occasions I, and my associates, have briefed the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy and subcommittees of the Armed Services Committees. This, however, has always been on a basis that no release of the testimony would be given.

It is my considered opinion that this is a wise precedent and in the national interest. Release of the testimony given by intelligence officers is rather different than testimony given by policy making officials of the government. The intelligence which we collect here in the Central Intelligence Agency is on an all-source basis. It comes not only from other intelligence operating units of this government but also from many friendly foreign sources. If those foreign sources are put on notice that intelligence which they may share with us is subject to public release through Congressional hearings or otherwise, it would, in my opinion, tend to dry up these invaluable sources. It is

consequently my considered judgment that none of this testimony should be released as a transcript of a hearing or as attributable to the Director of Central Intelligence or any specific American intelligence agency. As much of the testimony given at the above mentioned hearings was furnished by other intelligence agencies to the Central Intelligence Agency, I have consulted the members of the Intelligence Advisory Committee, who feel strongly that the attributed use of this testimony would be seriously harmful to the work and standing of the intelligence community.

If you consider it essential to your work, I would consent to the use of the material included in the transcript of the hearing as expurgated, on a non-attributed basis, in connection with the preparation of the report of your Committee, or as background material in connection with that report. It might be described as for example, "competent testimony presented to the Committee."

With your broad knowledge of the problems facing the intelligence community of this government, your appreciation of the necessity of preserving the security and integrity of our intelligence and of not furnishing a potential antagonist with the knowledge of our intelligence appraisal of his own position, I feel sure that on consideration you will appreciate the wisdom of the course I propose.

Mr. Norman Paul and I will be glad to go over the expurgated transcript with you or the members of your staff to explain the reasons for the omissions and for the alterations which have been necessitated in the text because of the deletion of the most highly sensitive parts of the transcript.

Faithfully yours,

Allen W. Dulles
Director

*Orig handwritten
address 5/9/66*
AWD/at & j1

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